

Message Text

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44

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 AID-05 ISO-00 /089 W

----- 122700

R 131255Z NOV 75

FM AMCONSUL TABRIZ

TO SECSTATE WAHSDC 147

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USUN 10

US MISSION GENEBA 10

ZNE/AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSULATE ISFAHAN

AMCONSULATE SHIRAZ

USINT BAGHDAD

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L TABRIZ 61

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, PINS, IR, IZ

SUBJ: IRAQI KURDISH REFUGEES

SUMMARY: CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE OF RECENT EXTENSIVE FIELD TRIP
SUPPORTS PREVIOUS REPORTS OF MASSIVE RETURN OF KURDISH REFUGEES
TO IRAQ. THOSE STILL NOT WISHING TO RETURN ARE BEING REMOVED
FROM CAMPS AND SCATTERED IN SMALL GROUPS ABOUT IRAN WHERE JOBS
ARE SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND FOR THEM. REMOVALS FROM CAMPS APPEAR
TO BE SUDDEN AND WITHOUT REFERENCE TO ANY PREVIOUS JOB IDENTIFICATION
BUT NUMBERS GOING TO ANY ONE LOCATION, EXCEPT PERHAPS TEHRAN, ARE
SO SMALL THAT SOME FORM OF INTEGRATION INTO IRANIAN SOCIETY SHOULD
NOT BE DIFFICULT. END SUMMARY

1. DURING PERIOD NOVEMBER 1-10 I TRAVELED IN FIVE PROVINCES. ALL
EVIDENCE CONFIRMED MASSIVE REFUGEE RETURN. GOVGEN ILAM IMPLIED
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MOST OF 27,000 REFUGEES IN HIS PROVINCE HAD RETURNED IRAQ. HE

WOULD NOT BE EXPLICIT BUT GOVGEN KURDISTAN STATED HE HAD HEARD SIMILAR FIUGRE FOR ILAM. HE ALSO STATE 8,000 REFUGEES FROM KURDISTAN HAD RETURNED AND 2,000 DECIDED REMAIN IRAN. REFUGEE CAMP IN KURDISTAN WHICH ONCE HELD WELL OVER 10,000 REFUGEES IS NOW GHOST TOWN OF EMPTY DOORLESS BARRACKS. DEP GOVGEN KERMANSHAHAN CITED 30,000 AS NUMBER WHO HAD RETURNED IRAQ FROM HIS PROVINCE AND SIAD REMAINING 10,000 WOULD BE ALMOST ENTIRELY SENT TO OTHER PROVINCES AWAY FROM KURDISH BORDER ATREA WITH IRAQ. ALL CAMPS IN KERMANSHAHAN ARE TO BE EMPTIED. ANOTHER RELIABLE SOURCE STATED IRANIAN FIRST AREA SUPPORT COMMAND, KERMANSHAH, HAS HAD 100 TRUCKS STEADILY ON ROAD MOVING REFUGEES SINCE ABOUT OCTOBER 1.

2. BASED ON THESE REPORTS APPROXIMATELY 60 TO 70,000 REFUGEES HAVE RETURNED WITHOUT INCLUDING THOSE RETURNING FROM WEST AZERBAIJAN(WOULD GUESS ABOUT 5,000 HAVE RETURNED OUT OF 22,000 BASED OF FIGURES OF TWO WEEKS AGO) AND KHUZISTAN. GOVGEN KURDISTAN STATED THAT IRAQIS HAD CHANGED THEIR MINDS AND WERE NOW SAYING THAT MANY OF RETURNEES WOULD BE ALLOWED TO RESETTLE IN KURDISH AREAS OF NORTHERN IRAQ. THIS, HE SAID, HAD CONVINCED MANY ADDITIONAL KURDS RETURN WHEN COMPARED WITH BREADKUP OF TRIBES RESULTING FOR THOSE REMAINING IRAN.

3. KURDS WISHING REMAIN IRAN ARE RAPIDLY BEING SPLIT UP INTO SMALL GROUPS AND MOVED OUT OF BORDER KURDISH AREAS OF IRAN FOR RESETTLEMENT ELSEWHERE. ON NOV 1 AND 2 I SAW CONVOYS OF 5 AND 20 TRUCKS, RESPECTIVELY, LOADED WITH BARZANI TRIBESMEN MOVING EAST INTO IRAN. TWO OTHER SOURCES REPORTED CONVOYS MOVING EAST ON OCTOBER 30 AND NOVEMBER 7. ALMOST NO ADVANCE NOTIFICATION IS BEING GIVEN TO PROVINCES RECEIVING THESE REFUGEES. GOVGEN HAMADAN STATED HE WAS TOLD TWO DAYS IN ADVANCE THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE 25 FAMILIES TO RESETTLE BUT ON DAY THEY WERE TO ARRIVE HE STILL KNEW NOTHING OF THEIR AGES, SEX COMPOSITION OF GROUP, OR SKILLS. GOVGEN LURISTAN SEEMED TO HAVE HAD EVEN LESS NOTICE SINCE ON MORNING I VISITED HIM HE WAS YELLING ON PHONE TO HIS SUBORDINATE THAT 40 REFUGEE FAMILIES WERE TO ARRIVE THAT NIGHT AND SOME ARRANGEMENT HAD TO MADE FOR FOOD AND LODGING.

4. BEST ESTIMATE I CAN MAKE AT PRESENT IS THAT BY END NOVEMBER, WHEN BORDER WILL CLOSE, BETWEEN 15 AND 25,000 KURDISH REFUGEES WILL STILL BE IN IRAN BUT ALL CAMPS WILL BE CLOSED AND "REFUGEE CONFIDENTIAL

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PROBLEM" OFFICIALLY ENDED.

5. CONSUL'S COMMENT: DECISION TO SPLIT KURDS REMAINING IRAN INTO SMALL GROUPS THROUGHOUT IRAN MAKES SENSE FOR GOI FOR REASONS OF BOTH SECURITY (STRESSED BY SEVERAL OFFICIALS) AND FOR EASE OF INTEGRATION INTO IRANIAN SOCIETY. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS HARD BLOW FOR LARGELY TRIBAL PEOPLES WHO FOUGHT HARD FOR KURDISH AUTONOMY AND ARE NOW LOSING MUCH OF THEIR KURDISH IDENTITY,

IN LAND WHICH AS THEY SEE IT, BETRAYED THEIR CAUSE. IN MY
VIEW THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT SINGLE REASON FOR MASSIVE RETURN
OF KURDS WHO HAVE PASSED UP SEVERAL PREVIOUS CHANCES TO
RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IN IRAQ.
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